

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The Easton Cemetery Committee was established in 2004 as a permanent committee responsible for those cemeteries in Easton that do not have a Sexton, or a Care Association. At the same time, the Board of Selectmen appointed the Town Clerk as Sexton of all cemeteries in Easton, which did not have a Sexton.

Easton has seven cemeteries. These are Aspetuck; Center Street; Den; Gilberttown; Lyon, Maple Grove and Union. Center Street is not active; it has family gravesites available but appears to have no other remaining gravesites. Den, Lyon and Gilberttown cemetery are inactive. The town is responsible for those cemeteries that do not have a Care Association.

Each of these cemeteries originally had a Care Association that managed the funds used to maintain the cemetery. Only Aspetuck, Maple Grove and Union are still active cemeteries with known active Care Associations. In the case of Center Street cemetery, the last remaining member of the Association was Dwight Fanton. The Fanton family has several used and unused gravesites in the cemetery and wishes to use the remaining sites in the future. Other families also have gravesites available.

The Board of Selectmen on 11/18/2004 established a Cemetery Committee with Full Members and Adjunct Members. Alternate Members were added later. It appointed the people listed below to the initial terms indicated. Each full membership position will be re-appointed to a full six-year term when the initial term expires. Later, David Silverglade was appointed as an Alternate member in order to ensure public representation. Subsequently Lois Bloom resigned, when her term as President of the Easton Historical Society ended, and she was replaced by the current President Lynne Geane. Later Gary Haines was appointed as a full member to represent Aquarion Water Company, Inc, which had provided financial support for the work at Den cemetery. Den cemetery is on Aquarion property.

They also established separate accounts to receive funds for each of the cemeteries to be expended in each case specifically on the cemetery in question. This was required because Dwight Fanton, the last known remaining member of the Center Street Care Association transferred the Association funds to the town for maintenance of that cemetery only. His son Jonathan Fanton is an Adjunct member because of the family interest in Center Street and in the family gravesites in the cemetery. The other cemeteries have no known funding sources.

Mary Lou Weinstein is an Adjunct member because she has family gravesites in Center Street Cemetery and, in the past, helped maintain the cemetery when others ignored it.

During the last year, the following has been completed:

- The Board of Selectmen approved that the Park and Recreation Department should be responsible for cutting the grass and maintaining the plants and trees to the extent possible. The Public works Department have been very supportive in the maintenance of the cemeteries
- A survey of the Center Street Cemetery was completed by Conservart LLC with recommendations on maintenance required. The Samuel Staples gravesite was selected as the first restoration project. It is located in the Gilberttown cemetery. Conservart, LLC had completed a survey of the gravesite and the indicated the required restoration work. This was undertaken when weather permitted and is now complete.
- The town appropriated \$7,700 to restore selected Bradley graves that were of historical importance as founder residents of Easton. These were cleaned and restored in the Spring. At the same time, the large trees that were growing from, or near, these and other graves were removed to prevent further damage. We are grateful to the Aspetuck Cemetery Association for an \$800 donation towards this task.
- At the same time, a photographic library of the cemetery and the individual gravestones was completed. Kevin Andrew King or "Drew" King is not an Easton resident but he has completed extensive research on Center Street Cemetery and has photographed all of the gravesites. Both he and David Silverglade have completed a survey of the cemetery so that the location of the gravestones was known before any work is undertaken.
- Ground penetrating radar was used to look under the ground and investigate a large clear grassy area in Center Street that appeared to be clear of gravesites. This work discovered almost 100 previously unknown graves in both Center Street and a similar number in Den cemetery. Drew King is engaged in extensive research that has uncovered a similar number of burials in Center Street cemetery that appear to have no known marker.
- In the Summer, a group of volunteers from Easton and other Connecticut communities sprayed and cleaned all of the gravestones in the Center Street, Den, Gilberttown and Lyon cemeteries.
- Cheryl Norton completed a short DVD of the work done on the Center Street cemetery. It is available for public viewing.

The current Cemetery Committee members are listed below. Thanks are due to them and other volunteers for the work done this year. Thanks are also due to Joan Kirk for the work as Secretary of the committee.

Full Members Beginning

W. Derek Buckley [Chair]
Phil Doremus [Vice Chair]
Lynne Geane
Gary Haines

Alternate Members

David Silverglade
Robert Bloom

Adjunct Members

Jonathan Fanton
Kevin Andrew King
Mary Lou Weinstein

Joan Kirk [Secretary]

Respectfully submitted,
W. Derek Buckley,
Chairman